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NATO-Canada: Alliance members are concerned over Canada's contemplated force reductions in Europe but hope to limit their effect.

West German Foreign Minister Brandt believes that Canada's foreign minister and defense minister opposed Trudeau's decision and will be seeking ammunition at next month's meeting of the Defense Planning Committee with a view to reversing the prime minister's decision or at least stretching the reductions over a longer period. The Germans fear the gap left by a Canadian withdrawal could not be closed and that the decision might lead the US to reduce its troop commitments in Europe. The Dutch are also unhappy with the impending Canadian withdrawal and see little likelihood that West Europeans will fill the gap.

Both NATO Secretary General Brosio and the Germans favor a multilateral effort, before the planning committee meeting, to influence the scope and timing of any Canadian force reductions. Brosio also favors prompt US-UK-German consultations on how to take up any slack in Alliance defenses.

Pressure from its allies will almost certainly not deter Ottawa from reducing, perhaps substantially, its forces in Europe. The specific cutbacks have not yet been determined, however, and will be hotly debated within the cabinet. A concerted effort by the NATO partners to convince Canada to forgo reductions of a specific type might succeed.

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